

****Please note: All articles are available in the attached PDF.***

****To receive the Daily News Digest in your inbox, email R6Press@epa.gov.***

1 — Dallas County Officials to weigh in on Texas radioactive dump site proposal, DMN, 4/3/2017

<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/environment/2017/04/03/dallas-county-officials-weigh-texas-radioactive-dump-site-proposal>

Andrews County is a five-hour drive to the west, but a proposed project there is worrying some Dallas County officials. Waste Control Specialists has an application pending to store tons of used fuel from nuclear power plants in sparsely populated West Texas. That radioactive waste could potentially pass through Texas' major cities -- including ones in the Dallas area -- by train.

2 — Fate of Camp Minden burn chamber still unknown, Shreveport Times, 4/10/2017

<http://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/news/2017/04/10/though-its-job-almost-complete-fate-camp-minden-burn-chamber-still-up-air/100294612/>

The yearlong disposal of 15 million pounds of an explosive propellant at Camp Minden will be complete by Easter, but questions still remain regarding the fate of the contained burn chamber that has been used to perform the job. About 350,000 pounds of M6, an explosive propellant for launching artillery shells, remain to be disposed, Winston Matejowsky with the Louisiana Military Department (LMD) told the Camp Minden Citizens Advisory Group at its meeting Monday night.

3 — Massive Texas Tire Fire Required EPA Rescue, Gizmodo, 4/11/2017

<http://gizmodo.com/massive-texas-tire-fire-required-epa-rescue-1794199978>

Odessa, Texas has been featured in pop culture landmarks like No Country For Old Men as the quintessential middle of nowhere town. It's so isolated that when an estimated 100,000 tires caught fire on Sunday, the closest fire hydrant was about four miles away. That means that a lot of toxic smoke filled the air and there was plenty of time to shoot some jaw-dropping drone footage.

4 — 'Brave New Workers': A Texas Cowboy Finds Fortune In The Wind, KUHT, 4/10/2017

<http://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2017/04/10/195599/brave-new-workers-a-texas-cowboy-finds-fortune-in-the-wind/>

Growing up on the plains of West Texas, Lanny Copeland says there weren't too many options for a young man looking to make a living. "If you weren't a farmer," Copeland says, "chances were pretty good you were in the oil field." But from early on, he knew what he wanted to be when he grew up — to follow in his father's footsteps as a cowboy and ranch manager.

5 — SOUTHWEST RESEARCH INSTITUTE SATELLITES WILL REVEAL HURRICANE INTENSITY, Texas Standard, 4/10/17

<http://www.texasstandard.org/stories/categories/energy-environment/>

Our understanding of hurricanes is about to take a huge leap forward thanks to San Antonio-based Southwest Research Institute. The groundbreaking work is being done by satellites SwRI describes as being able to fit on your desk. CYGNSS or the Cyclone Global Navigation Satellite System is an eight-satellite constellation that was launched in mid-December.

6 — Hearing set over Little Rock landfill's tainting of groundwater, Arkansas online, 4/10/2017

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2017/apr/10/hearing-set-over-lr-landfill-s-tainting/>

A Little Rock landfill that faced public criticism several years ago for odors is the subject of corrective action for contaminating groundwater in the city. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality will hold a public hearing at 6 p.m. April 18 at the department's headquarters in North Little Rock before determining what the corrective action will be.

7 — For the 2nd year, severe coral bleaching has struck the Great Barrier Reef, Times Picayune, 4/9/17

http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/04/great_barrier_reef_bleaching_f.html#incart_river_index

Scientists just back from a 5,000 mile aircraft survey of Australia's Great Barrier Reef pronounced a dire verdict Sunday: Warm waters have severely bleached large swaths of its corals for the second year in a row in a deadly one-two punch. In 2016, two thirds of corals in the northern sector of the reef died after severe bleaching from unusually warm waters. Now this year, researchers with the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University in Queensland, who reported the previous findings, say that the reef's central sector has been hit by another year of damaging warmth

8 — Nuclear plant owners expand search for rescue to more states, ABC News, 3/9/17

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/nuclear-plant-owners-expand-search-rescue-states-46686109>

The natural gas boom that has hammered coal mines and driven down utility bills is hitting nuclear power plants, sending multi-billion-dollar energy companies in search of a financial rescue in states where competitive electricity markets have compounded the effect. Fresh off victories in Illinois and New York, the nuclear power industry is now pressing lawmakers in Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania for action. Lobbying efforts are bubbling up into proposals, even as court battles in Illinois and New York crank up over the billions of dollars that ratepayers will otherwise foot in the coming decade to keep nuclear plants open longer.

9 — Gag order keeps Oregon from telling public about cancer-causing pollutant, Organlive, 4/10/17

http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/04/gag_order_keeps_oregon_from_telling_public_about_cancer-causing_pollutant.html

Oregon officials think they've found high levels of a cancer-causing chemical in the air near a Lebanon battery parts maker, but a judge won't let them say a word about it. Linn County Circuit Court Judge Thomas A. McHill on Friday agreed to Entek International's request for what appears to be an unprecedented gag order against state environmental and health regulators. Entek would be "irreparably harmed" if the regulators told the public about the preliminary finding, McHill wrote.

10 — Texas now has earthquake sensors. But will anyone be watching them?, Fuel Fix, 4/10/17

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2017/04/10/texnet-earthquake-monitoring-looks-for-state-funding/>

It looks like TexNet, the program installing 55 new earthquake sensors all over Texas, may get state funding after all. Two years ago, the state Legislature sent \$4.5 million to the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin to start the program. Legislators, scientists and the oil and gas industry were all concerned with a boost in the number of earthquakes in Texas.

11 — How rubber ducks, songbirds help scientists study Louisiana wetlands loss, Advocate, 4/10/17

http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/article_e7f35218-1bb0-11e7-9574-a7e76d322b12.html

Last year, the Louisiana Audubon Society captured nearly two dozen warblers and attached geolocators to them. Once outfitted, the songbirds with heads and chests the color of sweet corn look like they're wearing backpacks. After wintering in Latin America, the warblers are back in the U.S. for the summer. Scientists hope the birds, which weigh

about 5 cents in pennies, can teach them about habitat loss on two continents and provide insight into the spread of malaria.

12 Residents plan to sue Formosa for pollution, Victoria Advocate, 4/7/2017

<https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/news/2017/apr/06/residents-plan-to-sue-formosa-for-pollution/>

A group of residents plan to sue Formosa if it doesn't stop releasing plastic pellets into Lavaca Bay. Fish in the bay and surrounding waterways consume the pellets, which the residents say are toxic. That could harm people when they consume the fish.



ENVIRONMENT APR 3

Dallas County officials to weigh in on Texas radioactive dump site proposal



Jeff Mosier, Environmental Writer

Don't miss a story. Like us on Facebook.

Like 363K

Andrews County is a five-hour drive to the west, but a proposed project there is worrying some Dallas County officials.

Waste Control Specialists has an application pending to store tons of used fuel from nuclear power plants in sparsely populated West Texas. That radioactive waste could potentially pass through Texas' major cities -- including ones in the Dallas area -- by train.

Dallas County commissioners are scheduled to vote Tuesday on a resolution opposing any effort to transport "high level" radioactive waste through this area.

"The public health of Dallas County residents must be protected. Just because the railroad goes through the county does not mean that the population of a large urban area should be put in peril," Commissioner Theresa Daniel said in a written statement.

Těxás suěs its fõrměř gõvěřňõř. nõw ěněřgý šěčřětářý. õvěř ňučlěář wáště šťõřágě

Daniel asked that the resolution be placed on the agenda. The proposed waste site would hold spent fuel from nuclear power plants, where the waste is now housed as it awaits a long-term dump site.



County Commissioner Theresa Daniel plans to introduce a resolution Tuesday opposing the transportation of nuclear waste through Dallas County.
(Nathan Hunsinger/The Dallas Morning News) Staff Photographer

Bexar County commissioners have already expressed their opposition, and San Antonio city officials are considering weighing in on the issue.

Midland County officials are also considering a resolution.

"The transportation of spent nuclear fuel takes place safely every day, of every week, of every year in the United States," said Waste Control spokesman Chuck McDonald. "There's never been a single accident that resulted in the release of any radioactive material of any kind."

He said a recent Department of Energy report confirmed that.

The first phase of Waste Control's plan would take spent fuel from plants that had been closed and decommissioned, McDonald said.

The Department of Energy, now led by former Gov. Rick Perry, has not yet created a transportation plan for the Waste Control proposal. But some possible routes lead through heavily populated areas.

The Waste Control plan calls for the waste to arrive by rail. Trucks would only be used if the plant didn't have direct access to a rail line.

Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins said he's not taking a stance on the Waste Control application and acknowledged that the nuclear "waste has to go somewhere."

"The metroplex has 7 million people, and I am responsible for the safety of 2.6 million here in Dallas County," he said. "We simply don't want radioactive waste to come through our area. There are ways to route those trains around."

Andrews County, where the dump would be located, is one of the least populated areas in Texas. It had about 18,000 residents in 2015.

Environmental activists are rounding up support from local governments in an effort to halt the proposal to store the waste along the Texas border with New Mexico. Waste Control, a firm started by the late Dallas billionaire Harold Simmons, has submitted its application but this is likely to be a long process.

One other company, Holtec International, submitted an application last month. That site is in a county adjacent to Andrews, just across the New Mexico border.

McDonald called these efforts by environmental groups "premature" and "publicity stunts." He said there would be further public hearings. And local government along the transportation routes would have input.

Tom "Smitty" Smith, outgoing director of Public Citizen's Texas office, said the transportation plan will be finalized after the permit is issued. He said this is the time for local governments and individuals to have their say.

Critics — including Public Citizen and the Sustainable and Economic Development Coalition — have pointed to many reasons why they oppose the plan. They are concerned the site could taint the Ogallala aquifer or that it's not sufficiently secure.

On Monday, Public Citizen pointed to the danger of a terrorist attack or accident while a train and its waste pass through populated areas.


"... Current nuclear waste transport casks have not been subjected to full-scale testing," Smith said in a written statement. "For example, the casks are only required to withstand an engulfing fire at 1475 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes, while materials that share the railways burn at much hotter temperatures, like diesel, which burns at 1800° F and for longer than 30 minutes."

Critics also worry the Andrews County facility could turn into a permanent — rather than temporary — storage site.

The federal government previously decided to permanently house its high-level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository in Nevada. After years of political fights and questions about its suitability, the project was essentially shelved during President Barack Obama's administration.

But there are efforts by President Donald Trump's administration to revive the Yucca Mountain project. Trump's 2018 budget included \$120 million for repository construction, which is opposed by Nevada politicians. And Perry made a surprise visit to the site Monday.

There's also pressure from the state of Texas in support of the project. Attorney General Ken Paxton filed a lawsuit against Perry, as energy secretary, over Yucca Mountain. The litigation demands that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission take an official vote on the project.

 VIEW COMMENTS

ENVIRONMENT

ENERGY

BUSINESS

DOÑALD TRUMP

TEXAS

Get the Most Important D-FW News in Your Inbox

Sign up for our daily email newsletters

your@email.com

Get Headlines, Business, SportsDaily, and GoodEJive. Choose

SIGN UP NOW

NEWS

LOADING...

[About Us](#)

[Careers](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Special Sections](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Service](#)

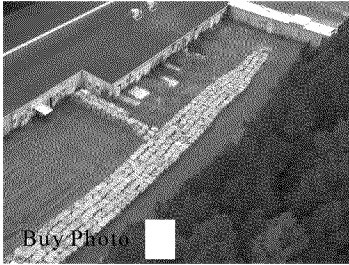
[Site Map](#)

©2017, The Dallas Morning News Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Fate of Camp Minden burn chamber still unknown

[Sarah Crawford](#), sarah.crawford@shreveporttimes.com

Published 10:15 p.m. CT April 10, 2017 | Updated 3 hours ago



*(Photo: Louisiana State
Police/File/The Times)*

The yearlong disposal of 15 million pounds of an explosive propellant at Camp Minden will be complete by Easter, but questions still remain regarding the fate of the contained burn chamber that has been used to perform the job.

About 350,000 pounds of M6, an explosive propellant for launching artillery shells, remain to be disposed, Winston Matejowsky with the Louisiana Military Department (LMD) told the Camp Minden Citizens Advisory Group at its meeting Monday night.

But Matejowsky also reported that as of this past Friday, Explosive Services International, the company overseeing the operation, had not yet given LMD a draft plan for dismantling the contained burn chamber that

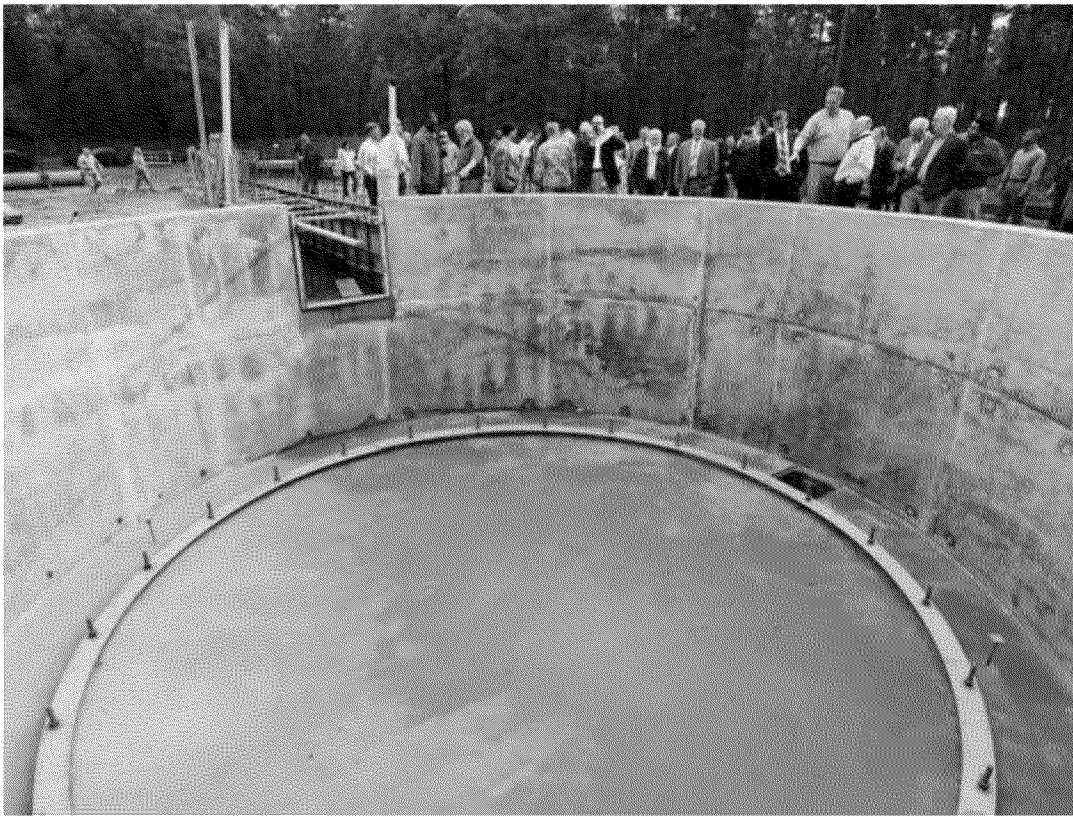
has been used for disposal.

“We’re ready to move on this thing, and we feel like it’s being stalled,” CAG board member Rick Broussard said.

The future of the burn chamber once the disposal is complete has been the subject of debate for several months.

Some citizens are fighting the idea that the chamber could remain in operation at Camp Minden, following the completion of the M6 disposal, to be used for disposing other items.

Buy Photo



Local and federal officials visit Camp Minden Dec. 10, 2015. (Photo: Henrietta Wildsmith/The Times)

Though ESI's contract with LMD calls for the equipment to be torn down at job's end, ESI Vice President Jason Poe has said that the operation is cutting edge and would be beneficial in disposing of other materials such as air bags in an "environmentally-friendly" manner.

Supporters of ESI and the burn chamber tout the operation's innovation and economic benefits, while many opponents fear potential safety hazards if disposal continues with materials other than M6.

Matejowsky said Gov. John Bel Edwards will make the ultimate decision on whether the burn chamber can extend its stay at Camp Minden.

"Once a decision is made (whether it can stay), then we will know which way the plan needs to go," Matejowsky said.

Meanwhile, it has been reported that state Rep. Gene Reynolds and state Sen. Ryan Gatti will be conducting a poll in the area surrounding Camp Minden in order to gauge general public opinion.

[Buy Photo](#)



The contained burn chamber used by Explosive Service International to dispose of M6 propellant and Clean Burning Igniter as it made its journey through Haughton, La. along La. Hwy 157 to Louisiana National Guard's Camp Minden, Feb. 11, 2016. (Photo: Sgt. Noshoba Davis/Special to The Times)

ESI was contracted to dispose of M6 and Clean Burning Igniter in 2015, three years after a 2012 explosion at one of Explo Systems' leased bunkers at Camp Minden shattered windows in homes up to four miles away and created a 7,000-foot mushroom cloud.

The investigation that followed revealed that millions of pounds of M6 were stored in 98 bunkers at Camp Minden. Explo left the material there after going bankrupt in 2013.

The current version of ESI's contract has been extended to Aug. 31.

"The people at this table have been at it for three years, and we really don't want to stretch it out longer than we need to," CAG President Ron Hagar said.

Matejowsky said he felt the same way.

"We don't want to either," he said. "We'd like to see a closure to it all."

Read or Share this story: <http://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/news/2017/04/10/though-its-job-almost-complete-fate-camp-minden-burn-chamber-still-up-air/100294612/>

Pay off your mortgage
faster with a
15-year fixed loan

Select remaining balance

\$225,000

Terms & Conditions apply. NMLS#1136

Massive Texas Tire Fire Required EPA Rescue



Brett Jones

Today 12:11am · Filed to: FIRE

VIDEO SPECIAL FUTURE 100 SCIENCE REVIEWS FIELD GUIDE



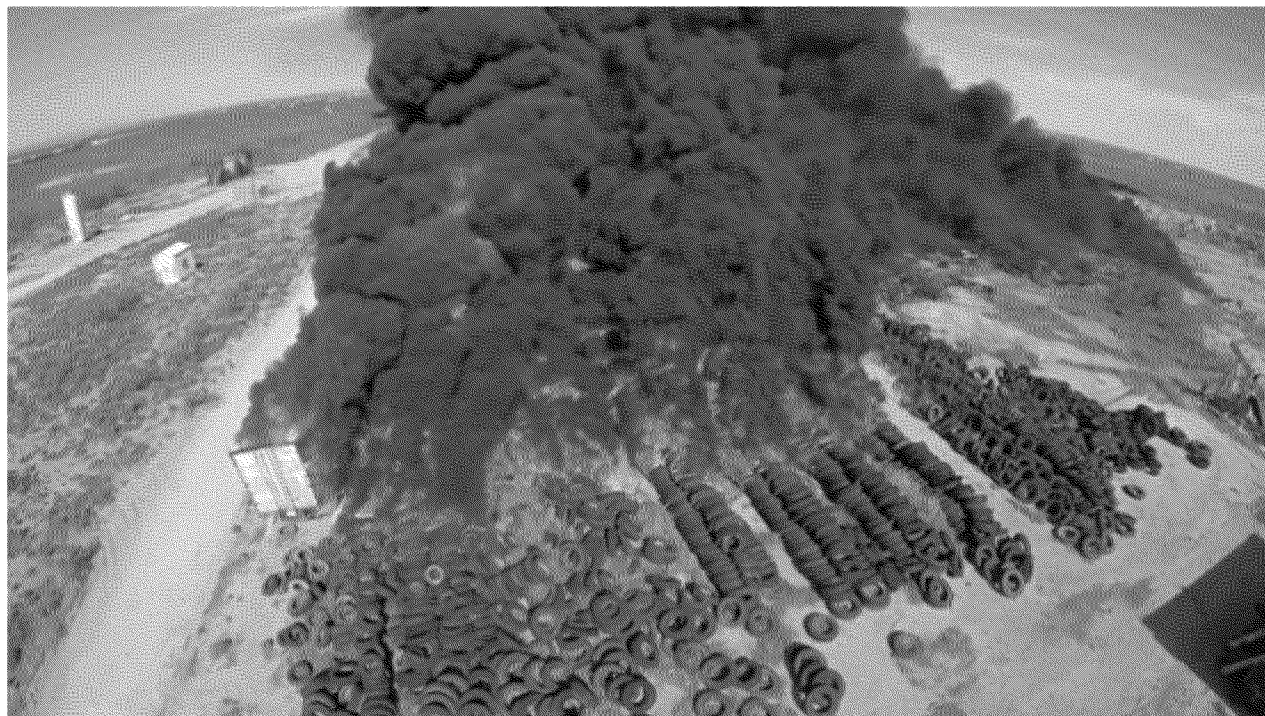
42.9K



97



10



GIF: SF1

Odessa, Texas has been featured in pop culture landmarks like *No Country For Old Men* as the quintessential middle of nowhere town. It's so isolated that when an estimated 100,000 tires caught fire on Sunday, the closest fire

hydrant was about four miles away. That means that a lot of toxic smoke filled the air and there was plenty of time to shoot some jaw-dropping drone footage.

“It’s still burning. It was way beyond our means to put it out last night,” West Odessa Volunteer Fire Chief Jimmy Ellis told a local news outlet on Monday. The fire reportedly started around 3 PM on Sunday afternoon and raged throughout the night. Because of the lack of fire hydrants, local firefighters found themselves in a losing cycle of bringing in fire trucks, spraying their water resources and going back for more. When they returned, the fire had just grown larger.

The frustrated volunteers simply didn’t have the resources to stop it. “We haven’t even been able to get down in the pit where it started because it’s so hot you can’t get down in that pit,” Ellis said. “The rubber just stays hot and it will adhere to your boots and the bunker gear.” Early on Monday, the EPA was called in to provide additional resources.

Local residents were warned to stay indoors and keep their windows closed. Several roads were shut down while black smoke billowed for miles. Burning tires produce hundreds of toxic pollutants and inhaling the smoke can cause numerous adverse health effects.

According to an update from local outlet NewsWest9, authorities believed the fire had been contained around 8 PM on Monday evening and firefighters were still targeting hot spots. No injuries have been reported and the cause of the blaze is still unknown.

Check out the insane footage below and imagine your own Herzogian voice-over.

[YouTube, OA Online, NewsWest9]

More fires



Inside the Midwest Wildfires That Burned Cattle Alive



Wildfires Have Already Toasted a Staggering Amount of Land in the US This Year



Florida Man Accidentally Destroys at Least 10 Homes While Burning Books

Rhett Jones ✉ rhett.jones@gizmodo.com 🐦 [@rhettjonez](https://twitter.com/rhettjonez)

Writer

Sponsored Links by Taboola

6 Credit Cards That Are An Upgrade To Your Current Card
[Read on CreditCards.com ›](#)

Is the GX7 Golf Driver Replacing Traditional Drivers?
[Read on GX7 Golf ›](#)

We Can Guess Your Education Level With This Quiz
[Read on Definition ›](#)

There Are 7 Types of Irish Last Names - Which One Is Yours?
[Read on Ancestry ›](#)

■ KUHF HD is currently experiencing technical difficulties. Our engineers are working to restore service as quickly as possible.

ONAT



search

News

Arts/Culture

Education

Topics

Programs

Support

Music

UH

About

Contact Us

TV8

NW-887

QA-KAL

MIXAP

LI-TNLM



KUHT TV 8 | Passport

Binge your favorite shows w
Find out how to gain access to extended conten

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

'Brave New Workers': A Texas Cowboy Finds Fortune In The Wind

What happens to workers when an industry collapses or a new technology takes over? NPR brings you stories of people adapting to a changing economy this week: a former cowboy in the wind industry.

ALEX HOROWITZ/GHAZI | APRIL 14, 2017, 12:20 PM

search

News

Arts/Culture



Courtesy of Lanny Copeland

Lanny Copeland, seen during his cattle ranching career, says he was lucky to find his way into the booming Texas wind industry when he did.

Growing up on the plains of West Texas, Lanny Copeland says there weren't too many options for a young man looking to make a living.

"If you weren't a farmer," Copeland says, "chances were pretty good you were in the oil field."

But from early on, he knew what he wanted to be when he grew up — to follow in his father's footsteps as a cowboy and ranch manager.

"You felt like you were a part of history," Copeland says, "taking part in the great Texas cattle industry."

After studying range land management and animal husbandry at Texas A&M, Copeland spent years wrangling cattle for other owners, until one day in the mid-1990s he and his father were given the opportunity to buy out part of their boss' herd, to begin a business of their very own.

"To have something of our own was the greatest feeling in the world to me," says Copeland. "And I think to Daddy as well, cause he had developed this herd of cattle, and he had managed it for so long."

For 10 years, things went well for the Copelands. Despite intermittent seasons of low rainfall, they managed to keep their herd healthy, and their operation afloat. But in the mid-2000s, a drought finally proved too much.

"Even with the best herd you can put together," Copeland says, "if the weather doesn't cooperate and the drought doesn't break, at some point, it doesn't matter."

Copeland and his father were forced to cut their losses and sell off their remaining cattle and equipment.

"I found myself at 44 years old, really wondering what in the world am I going to do now," he says, "because this is pretty much all I've ever done."

For months, Copeland struggled to find a new line of work, hoping to secure a new means of supporting a daughter in college and a son in junior high. Until one day, in the late winter of 2008, Copeland came across a notice for a wind energy job fair, hosted by a power company called Invenenergy, at a Lubbock, Texas, hotel. Copeland thought he might be one of five or six attendees who decided to give it a shot.

Arts & Culture

Education

Topics

Programs

Support

Music

UH

About

Contact Us

search

News

Arts & Culture

Education

Topics

Instead, Copeland says he found a room packed with over a hundred prospective applicants, many of them decades younger than him.

"I felt pretty old in that room because there were a lot of 25-year-old guys with applications in their hands," Copeland says.

Nevertheless, he submitted his application and hoped for the best. Not too long afterwards, he received a call from a hiring manager, inviting him to visit one of the company's facilities for an aptitude test and to take a mandatory climb test. When the manager asked about whether he would be able to climb one of the towering turbines, he says he was honest about his misgivings.

"I remember telling him, 'I have no idea if I can do it,' " says Copeland, "didn't like heights much anyway and said, 'yeah, we'll see.' "

Sure enough, when he arrived, the task seemed daunting. "That was the longest ladder I'd ever seen in my life," he says.

In the end, Copeland made it easily to the top of his first wind turbine, and when he did, he says he found a beautiful landscape waiting below. Looking out over an expanse of rolling ranchland sprinkled with wind turbines, Copeland says he knew that he had found something worth pursuing.

"I remember thinking — 'not many people have ever done this,' " says Copeland.

Copeland passed that turbine climbing test, and now, nine years later, he works as an Operations and Maintenance Manager for Invenergy, overseeing two wind farms and 27 wind turbine technicians in Texas.

Copeland says he was lucky to find his way into the Texas wind industry when he did. Texas currently produces the most wind energy of any state in the country, and earlier this year "wind turbine technician" was named the fastest growing job in the U.S. economy by [the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

As for Lanny Copeland, he says he's striking a balance between his old professional identity and his new one.

"Do I still see myself as a cowboy?" Copeland asks. "Yeah, I do. And I hope I always do." Still, Copeland says, he's thrilled to have found a new life for himself in the booming Texas wind industry.

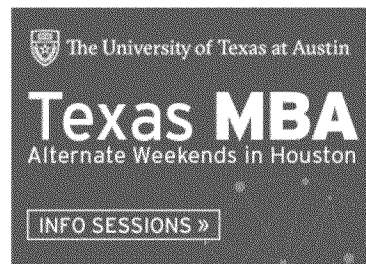
"It's the future," he says. "Wind energy is the future."

Copyright 2017 NPR. To see more, visit <http://www.npr.org/>.

Share



Support Comes From



Programs

Support

Music

UH

About

Contact Us

search

News

Arts/Culture

Education

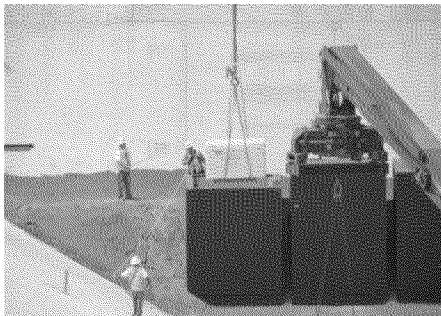
Topics

Programs

Support

Music

RELATED



Could Rick Perry Influence West Texas Nuclear Waste Plan?



Pakistan Sues Federal Government For Not Acting On Nuclear Waste Site

Wind Energy Takes Flight in the Heart of Texas Oil Country



Congress Could Roll Back Chemical Safety Rules Drafted After Texas Explosion

UH

About

Contact Us

search

News

Arts/Culture

Education

Topics

Programs

Support

Music

UH

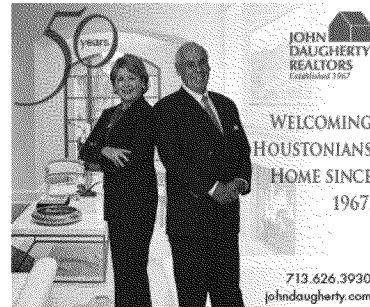
About

Contact Us

MOST VIEWED

[Alleged Killer of Deputy Greenwood Committed Suicide](#)
[Passenger Dragged Out of United Airlines Flight Sparks Up Roar](#)
[Classical Classroom Music Works, Ep. 4 | : Craig Heller Johnson, Activism in Classical Music \(Part 4\)](#)
[Students Press Texas Lawmakers For Say In School Curriculum](#)
[Resources Coming To Houston To Fight Gang Activity](#)

Support Comes From



search

[News](#)

[Arts/Culture](#)

[Education](#)

[Topics](#)

[Programs](#)

[Support](#)

[Music](#)

[UH](#)

[About](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Houston Public Media

A SERVICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



[News](#)

[Arts & Culture](#)

[Education](#)

[TV](#)

[News}}](#)

[Classical](#)

[About](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Houston Public Media is supported by your gift to the Houston Public Media Foundation and is licensed to the University of Houston

By Paul Flahive | April 10, 2017 9:30 am

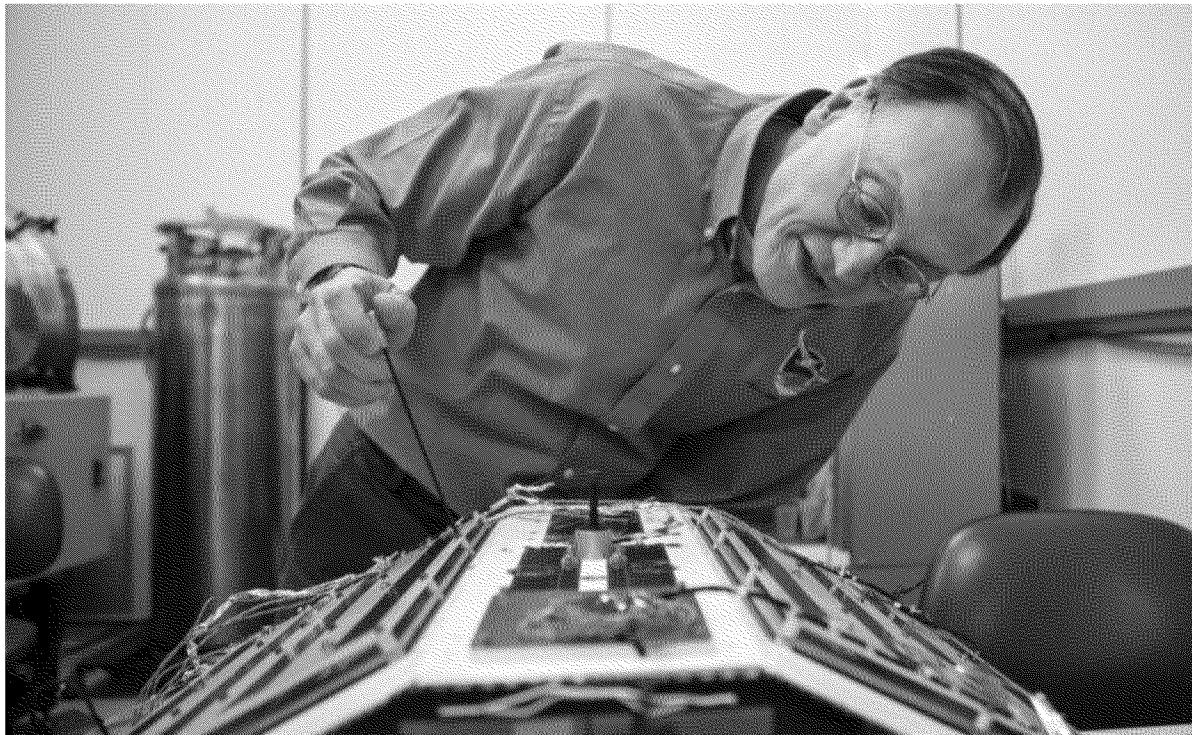
Tweet

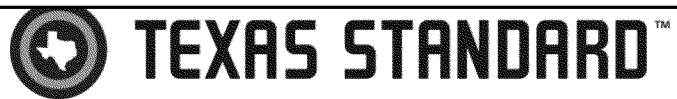
Like 0

Share

G+ Share

Share this on Google+





•



From Texas Public Radio:





TEXAS STANDARD™

•

improvement.

“We know well where a hurricane is going. We just don’t know what it is going to do when it gets there. Katrina is a good example. They expected a strong hurricane, but they did not expect the storm surge that came with it,” says Rose.

Heavy rain distorts modern monitoring, keeping wind speed hurricanes a mystery.

“Up until now, up until CYGNSS, they did not have the wind speed data under a hurricane. They were only able to use the Hurricane Hunters,” he says.

Hurricane Hunters are specially outfitted Air Force planes that have to literally fly into a hurricane.

Read more.

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

Tweet @TexasStandard
or leave a comment here

Name

Email

What do you think?





TEXAS STANDARD™

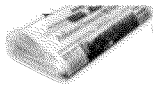
See how Horned Frogs are
learning to change the world.

TCU

NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE,
YOU'RE ON TEXAS STANDARD TIME

©2014 Texas Standard. A service of the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin





View Today's Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Print Edition



Login

Register

Subscribe Now

ArkansasOnline

Search ArkansasOnline

FOLLOW US:  

[Home](#) [News](#) [Obituaries](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [Sports](#) [Photos](#) [Videos](#) [Features](#) [Events](#) [Classifieds](#) [Jobs](#) [Homes](#) [Autos](#)

[Core Values](#) [Crime](#) [Right2Know](#) [Traffic](#) [Projects](#) [Archives](#) [News Tip](#) [Whole Hog Sports](#) [Arkansas Life](#) [Place an Ad](#) [Arkansas Daily Deal](#)

Tuesday, April 11, 2017, 9:54 a.m.

ADVERTISEMENT

TOP PICKS

Mobile Application
ArkansasOnline is just one click away on your smart-phone with our mobile app



ADVERTISEMENT

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Arkansas](#) /

Hearing set over Little Rock landfill's tainting of groundwater

By Emily Walkenhorst 

This article was published April 10, 2017 at 4:30 a.m.

Comment (1)

Font Size

A Little Rock landfill that faced public criticism several years ago for odors is the subject of corrective action for contaminating groundwater in the city.

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality will hold a public hearing at 6 p.m. April 18 at the department's headquarters in North Little Rock before determining what the corrective action will be.

BFI Landfill, on Mabelvale Pike near where it crosses Fourche Creek, has been closed since

2013. Test results from that year indicated high levels of arsenic and cobalt in groundwater on site that have held steady since then, according to department records.

The contamination was likely caused by landfill gas, which is created by a landfill and contributes to the release of metals from soil into groundwater, department spokesman Kelly Robinson said in an email to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.

[EMAIL UPDATES: Get free breaking news alerts, daily newsletters with top headlines delivered to your inbox]

The company, which declined to make anyone available for an interview, said the contamination does not spread beyond the landfill property.

The department, which also declined to make anyone available for an interview, said it had not studied whether the contamination affected Fourche Creek.

Fourche Creek is a 20-mile-long recreational creek in south Little Rock that is often filled with garbage from storm drains throughout the city and other illicit dumping.

The department noted two contaminated sites on the landfill's property.

"There are no residents close to the landfill; therefore no one should currently be impacted by this groundwater contamination," Robinson said in her email.

City residents do not get their drinking water from groundwater; Central Arkansas Water supplies water from Lake Maumelle to city residents.

Suggested corrective action includes upgrades to gas collection and control, treatment in specially constructed wetlands, and annual monitoring.

Brad Kiesling, a spokesman for BFI, said the company is already working to upgrade the landfill's flare, which destroys landfill gas. It's also working to improve pumps that help remove landfill gas, he wrote in an email to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.

In 2009, residents near the landfill began complaining about odors coming from the landfill after it began accepting waste from natural gas drilling sites in the Fayetteville Shale. Environmental officials declined to shut down the landfill in 2010, and the landfill closed when its permit expired in 2013.

Metro on 04/10/2017

Print Headline: Hearing set over LR landfill's tainting of groundwater

Tweet

ADVERTISEMENT

More *Arkansas*

Arkansas woman killed after car leaves state ...

North Little Rock man rushed to help before b...

Two teens latest shooting victims in Little R...

Arkansas school district is 1st to OK billboa...

Hearing set over Little Rock landfill's taint...

Officials: Arkansas woman's death due to meth...

Arkansas legislators clarify vote flubs

Tax-change talk a cloud on housing in Arkansa...

Vets call new home special; North Little Rock...

[More Arkansas stories >](#)

Comment on: Hearing set over Little Rock landfill's tainting of groundwater

To report abuse or misuse of this area please hit the "Suggest Removal" link in the comment to alert our online managers. Read our Terms of Use policy.

You must login to make comments.

[Login](#)

[Register](#)

[Subscribe Now](#)

Displaying 1 - 1 of 1 total comment



Jfish says...

April 10, 2017 at 8:11 a.m.

As our population grows and we continue to trash much more than we recycle, you will continue to see more of these issues. It is hard to believe that Fourche Creek has not been tested. Garbage in the creek is one thing, contamination is much more serious.

([permalink](#) | [suggest removal](#))

PAGE 1

[CLICK HERE TO MAKE A COMMENT](#)

To report abuse or misuse of this area please hit the "Suggest Removal" link in the comment to alert our online managers. Read our Terms of Use policy.

For the 2nd year, severe coral bleaching has struck the Great Barrier Reef



By [The Washington Post](#)

[Follow on Twitter](#)

on April 09, 2017 at 6:00 PM, updated April 09, 2017 at 6:01 PM

Scientists just back from a 5,000 mile aircraft survey of Australia's Great Barrier Reef pronounced a dire verdict Sunday: Warm waters have severely bleached large swaths of its corals for the second year in a row in a deadly one-two punch.

In 2016, two thirds of corals in the northern sector of the reef died after severe bleaching from unusually warm waters. Now this year, researchers with the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University in Queensland, who reported the previous findings, say that the reef's central sector has been hit by another year of damaging warmth.

"We've had a back-to-back bleaching for the first time," said Terry Hughes, who directs the center. "So we redid our aerial surveys again, which was a bit tough. I was hoping to never have to do it again."

After that first survey, Hughes tweeted: "I showed the results of aerial surveys of #bleaching on the #GreatBarrierReef to my students, And then we wept."

Coral bleaching occurs when unusually warm waters provide a stress to corals that in turn trigger a mass exodus of photosynthetic algae, called zooxanthellae, from their cells. The corals lose color and turn white, an outward indicator that their metabolism has been upended. The stronger the bleaching and the longer it goes on, the more likely corals are to die.

The Great Barrier Reef, the largest structure of its kind, is about 1,400 miles long. Nine hundred miles of that length have now experienced severe bleaching at some point during the past two years.

This year has seen the major bleaching shift southward, toward reefs just offshore of major population centers such as Cairns and Townsville.

The current survey encompassed 800 individual coral reefs—including many surveyed last year.

"Last year we lost 67 percent on average of the corals in the northern 700 kilometers (430 miles) of the barrier reef, between March and October," Hughes said. "We're likely to see something similar happen now in the middle third this year."

"That's obviously an enormous loss over two-thirds of the Great Barrier Reef," he added. "I wouldn't say the barrier reef is dying. But clearly, we're measuring serious losses here. And the reason it's happening is global warming."



The Great Barrier Reef is bleaching yet again

Temperatures in the waters surrounding the reef were so abnormally high last year that scientists concluded there was little doubt they could be attributed to a changing climate.

There have been four historic bleachings of the Great Barrier Reef in the past two decades as the planet has warmed by about 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), Hughes notes.

The prior large scale bleachings occurred in 1998, a dramatic El Nino year, and 2002. 2016 was another major El Nino year, but 2017 is not. Thus, the reef is now bleaching in both non-El Nino years and in consecutive years.

If major bleachings are becoming more common, that raises questions about the reef's ability to recover from such assaults at a time when global ocean temperatures are expected to continue to rise further.

Typically, corals require 10 years or more to recover from bleaching. Some species require considerably longer than that.

Scientists fear the planet will easily coast past 1.5 degrees Celsius in coming decades—and 2 degrees of warming will also be very difficult to prevent with the current warming trajectory.

A 2016 scientific study found that most of the world's corals will be threatened with "severe degradation" under either of these two warming scenarios. But limiting the Earth's warming to 1.5 degrees by the end of the century might allow at least some corals to adapt to the new climate.



By Chris Mooney, (c) 2017, The Washington Post

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement and Privacy Policy

© 2017 NOLA Media Group. All rights reserved (About Us).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of NOLA Media Group.

Community Rules apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

Ad Choices

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline
20/20 20/20
This Week This Week
What Would You Do? What Would You Do?
Live 1
Watch

...noted that since the shale revolution, the nation's most prolific gas field in California, electricity consumption hit a wall after the recession, while states have emphasized renewable energies and efficiency.

"You put a lot of this together and it's a perfect storm," said John Keeley, a spokesman for the Nuclear Energy Institute, an industry group.

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline
20/20 20/20
This Week This Week
What Would You Do? What Would You Do?
Live 1
Watch

ine claim to environmental credentials has drawn jeers from nuclear power's traditional critics.

"When did highly carcinogenic toxic waste become green?" said Eric Epstein, a longtime nuclear power watchdog in Pennsylvania.

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline
20/20 20/20
This Week This Week
What Would You Do? What Would You Do?
Live 1
Watch

In Illinois, where consumer advocates feared a jump in utility bills, Exelon won billions of dollars in subsidies to prop up two unprofitable nuclear plants in a heavily negotiated package that included money for energy efficiency measures.

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline
20/20 20/20
This Week This Week
What Would You Do? What Would You Do?
Live 1
Watch



Comments

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline

20/20 20/20

This Week This Week

What Would You Do? What Would You Do?

Live 1

Watch

SHARE



Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said it was clear Syrian president Bashar Assad's rule is "coming to an end," but cautioned that the U.S. is "not presupposing how that occurs," at a meeting of G7 foreign ministers in Lucca, Italy on Tuesday.



Tillerson's remarks came just hours ahead of his planned arrival in Moscow later in the day and amid growing criticism of Russia's support for the Syrian government after it launched a

S.
ternationa l
r o l i t i c s

M e n u

☐ Log In

Lifestyle
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

..... ☐
Entertainment
Virtual Reality

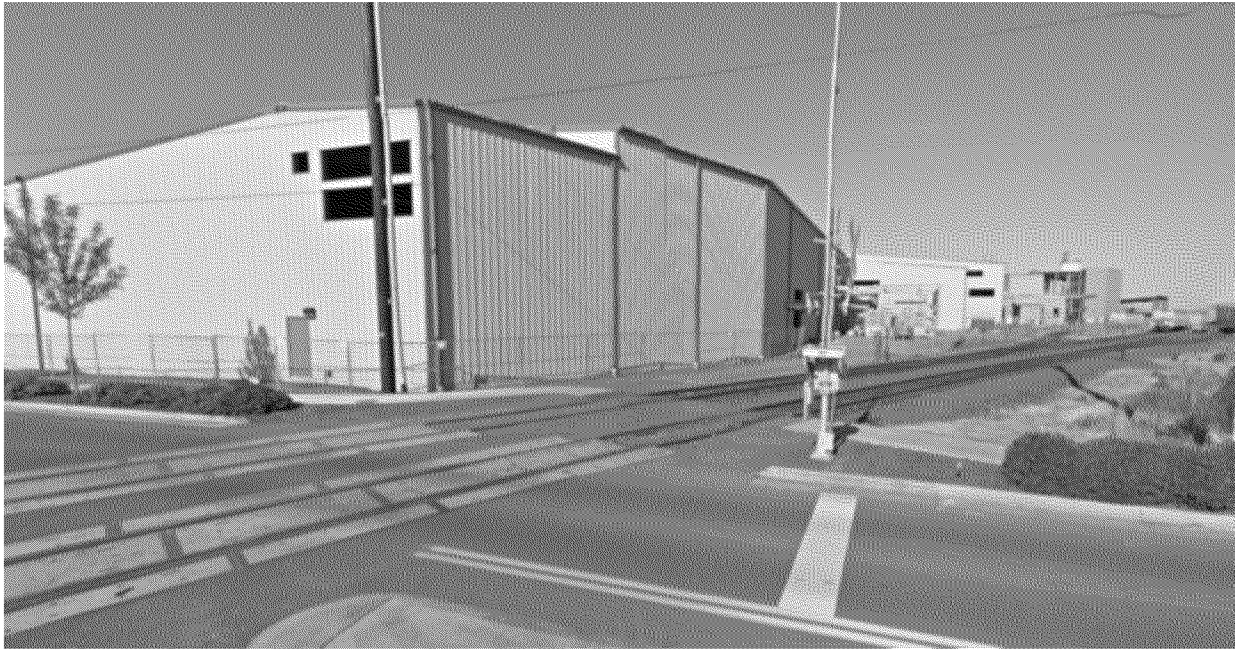
Health
Tech
Investigative
Sports
Weather

Privacy Policy Privacy Policy
Your CA Privacy Rights Your CA Privacy Rights
Children's Online Privacy Policy Children's Online Privacy Policy
Interest Based Ads Interest Based Ads
Terms of Use Terms of Use

Contact Us Contact Us
Yahoo! ABC News Network | © 2017 ABC News Internet Ventures. All rights reserved.

Shows
Good Morning America Good Morning America
World News Tonight World News Tonight
Nightline Nightline
20/20 20/20
This Week This Week
What Would You Do? What Would You Do?
Live 1
Watch

Gag order keeps Oregon from telling public about cancer-causing pollutant



Entek International's facility in Lebanon. (Google Street View)

By [Rob Davis](#) | [The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)
[Email the author](#) | [Follow on Twitter](#)



on April 10, 2017 at 6:58 PM, updated April 11, 2017 at 6:16 AM

Oregon officials think they've found high levels of a cancer-causing chemical in the air near a Lebanon battery parts maker, but a judge won't let them say a word about it.

Linn County Circuit Court Judge Thomas A. McHill on Friday agreed to Entek International's request for what appears to be an unprecedented gag order against state environmental and health regulators. Entek would be "irreparably harmed" if the regulators told the public about the preliminary finding, McHill wrote.

Ironically, though, much of what those regulators have to say appears in public court documents filed in their defense.

Those records say computer modeling indicates high levels of a cancer-causing solvent, trichloroethylene, may be present near Entek in an area that includes an elementary school.

Concentrations of the chemical could be more than 70 times higher than what health officials say is safe, the state's filings say. The company is the largest known source of the solvent in the area, they say.

Entek sued the state Thursday, arguing that the Department of Environmental Quality shouldn't be allowed to tell the public about the pollution because the plant's emissions are within its permitted limits.

The state would "unnecessarily alarm Entek employees and members of the community by distributing misleading information" about the company's lawful use of trichloroethylene, the company's attorneys argued in a filing.

The attorneys, Joel Mullin and Stephen Galloway, did not respond to a request for comment.

State health and environmental officials said in court filings that they had planned to develop a communications plan to tell the public what they know about the pollution. They also planned to tell residents they were deploying air monitors to verify what modeling has shown.

Lawyers for the state said regulators would explain clearly to the public that they were still gathering information about the situation, not taking any enforcement action against the company.

McHill's temporary restraining order prevents Oregon's environmental and health departments from discussing the case until either they've proven that Entek is violating an existing law, or they have established new statewide air pollution rules.

A Department of Environmental Quality spokeswoman and several environmental attorneys said they believe the order is unprecedented in the state.

"If the agencies are forced to respond to inquiries from the public by explaining that it cannot answer any questions because Entek has secured a court order to keep the monitoring secret, it is entirely possible that Entek's reputation will be worse off, not better," an Oregon Department of Justice attorney argued in a brief.

Under orders from Gov. Kate Brown after last year's Portland air pollution scare, state regulators have been drafting new rules that would crack down on air pollution from industrial sources. Many states have already gone much farther than Oregon to reduce toxic sources of air pollution.

Mark Riskedahl, executive director of the Portland-based Northwest Environmental Defense Center, said the gag order showed how important it is for the state to finish updating those new regulations. He said he'd never heard of an Oregon court prohibiting the state from discussing an issue with the public ever before.

"It is very troubling that the company would go to such great lengths to keep the public in the dark about this," Riskedahl said.

Attorneys for Entek and the state Department of Justice return to court Wednesday.

News researcher Lynne Palombo and staff reporter Fedor Zarkhin contributed to this report.

☐☐ Rob Davis

rdavis@oregonian.com


503.294.7657; @robwdavis

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement and Privacy Policy

© 2017 Oregon Live LLC. All rights reserved (About Us).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Oregon Live LLC.

Community Rules apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

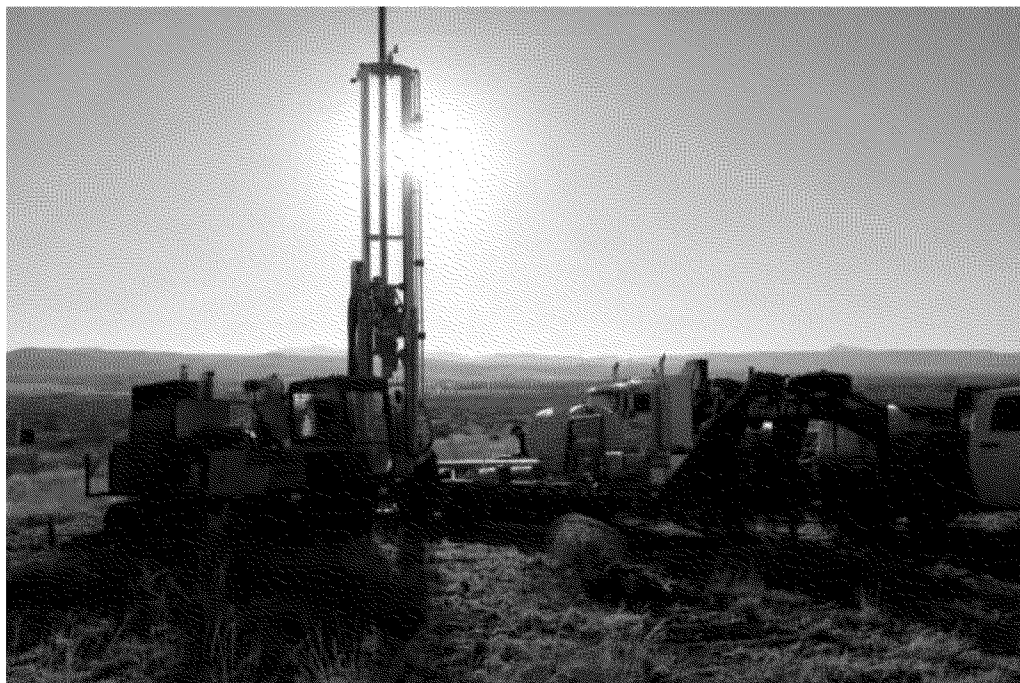
 Ad Choices



Your drilling needs fulfilled locally

Texas now has earthquake sensors. But will anyone be watching them?

Posted by [David Hunn](#) Date: April 10, 2017



In this Feb. 2, 2017 photo, scientists from the University of Texas and a contractor, Nanometrics, install a seismometer on a hillside owned by Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas. Scientists say it's clear there's a connection with the rise in earthquakes: Oil and gas operations pump billions of barrels of water deep into the earth every year, pressuring faults underground. Politicians, industry leaders and



Sponsored Content



5 Ways to Make Money Outside the Stock Market
yieldstreet



Do This Before Your Next Mortgage Payment (It's Genius!)
Bills.com



How to 'Fix' Crepey Skin
Health Headlines



What Your Net Worth Says About Your Retirement:
Free Guide
Fisher Investments

Recommended by



officials of the Texas Railroad Commission, which regulates the oil and gas industry, have steadfastly argued that there is little proof, if any, of such a tie.

(Lydia DePillis/Houston Chronicle via AP)

It looks like TexNet, the program installing 55 new earthquake sensors all over Texas, may get state funding after all.

Two years ago, the state Legislature sent \$4.5 million to the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin to start the program. Legislators, scientists and the oil and gas industry were all concerned with a boost in the number of earthquakes in Texas. Research suggested the quakes were tied to oil and gas wastewater disposal. But industry leaders and Texas Railroad Commissioners, who regulate drilling, said they saw no causal relationship and wanted more data.

RELATED: [Finding a place for seismographs in a land of oil and gas](#)

But when TexNet came back up before the Legislature this year, seeking another two years of funding, some legislators balked. The two-year-old crash in crude prices has made for a tough budget cycle.

Researchers will finish installing the seismometers this year. But the Bureau says it will have a hard time funding the accompanying research if the Legislature doesn't fund the program. It's asking for \$3.4 million for the two-year budget cycle.

TexNet is far from re-funded. But it has some champions. Rep. Drew Darby, a Republican from the oil and gas lands just east of Midland, is [introducing a bill](#) on Monday, [House Bill 2819](#), to make TexNet part of the bi-annual budget, to be considered for funding every year.

Ed Longanecker, president of the Texas Independent Producers & Royalty Owners Association, is testifying in support of the bill on Monday.

"Texas has lead the country in efforts to study this important issue in an effort to provide more reliable data on the true cause of seismic events in our state," Longanecker said in an email. "Correlation does not imply causation, and we must be able to separate fact from fiction to have a meaningful discussion."

[Sponsored Content](#)

[ENERGY SERVICES](#)

[POLITICS & POLICY](#)

[NewsJobs](#)

Get FuelFix straight to your email.

Enter your e-mail ..

SUBSCRIBE

Black
Zirconium



foreverspin™

[Oil & Gas Jobs](#)



These Are the Best Luxury Cars
Yahoo Search



Type Your Name, Wait 7
Seconds
TruthFinder



Thinking About Installing
Solar Panels? Read This First
Energy Bill Cruncher



Incredible Map Reveals Energy
Discovery That Spans Entire
U.S.
Banyan Hill Publishing

Exxon highlights plans for spending \$20
billion, creating jobs on Gulf Coast

Study: Most laid-off energy workers
remain out of work

How did Texas' oil capital do in the price
crash?

Oil field hiring could pick up next year,
survey shows

Anadarko cutting 58 jobs in East Texas

Sponsored Content

- Walmart's Grocery Pickup is Here and People Can't Get Enough - Order Online & Enjoy Same Day Pickup! Walmart
- Psoriatic Arthritis Symptoms: What You Should Know Yahoo Search
- Will Your Retirement Last as Long as You Do? Wells Fargo
- Thinking About a Divorce? Smart Ways to Manage Your Finances WFA
- This Stock Could Be Like Buying Amazon in 1997 The Motley Fool
- You'd never expect why she was arrested. CBS News
- Think You Know the Presidents? Take the Nicknames Quiz HowStuffWorks

We Recommend

- Apple just made a historic and risky change to all iPhones — and you probably didn't even notice (AAPL)
- Man found dead in Heights home
- Sean Spicer gets into heated exchange with reporter about Trump's credibility: 'When he says something, can we trust that it's real?'
- People are having such a hard time affording prescriptions that they're turning to crowdfunding
- Dollar General is defying the retail apocalypse and opening 1,000 stores—here's what its like to shop there (DG)
- Easing coal rules unlikely to make US energy independent
- Gun control advocates say Newtown ruling is bad precedent

Recommended by

[View Comments](#)



Black Zirconium

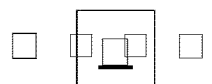


foreverspin™



United States Residents Born Between 1936
and 1966 Are In For a Big Surprise

EVERQUOTE



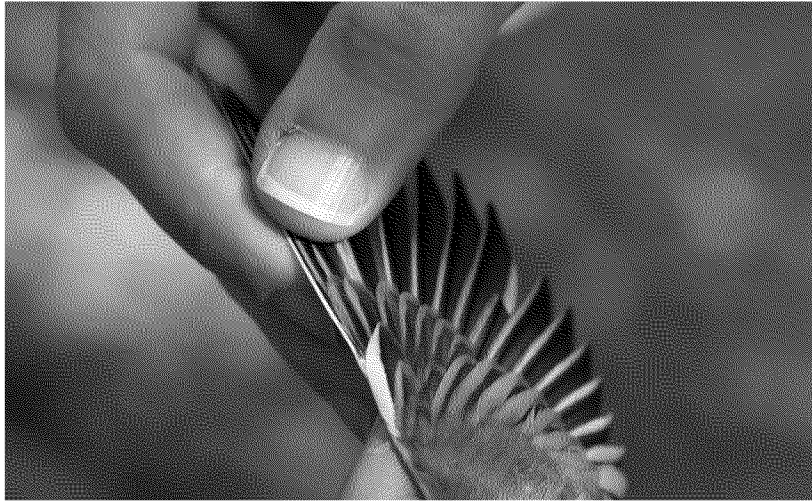


http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/article_e7f35218-1bb0-11e7-9574-a7e76d322b12.html

How rubber ducks, songbirds help scientists study Louisiana wetlands loss

BY STEVE HARDY | SHARDY@THEADVOCATE.COM APR 10, 2017 - 4:45 PM



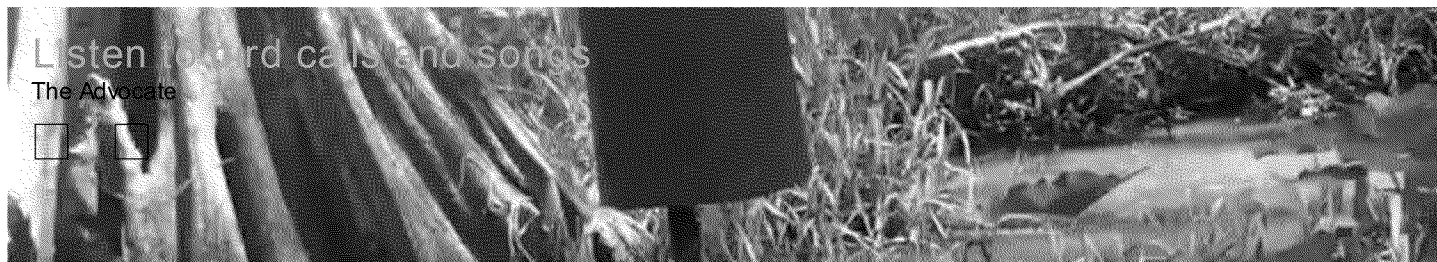


Steve Hardy

In the Bluebonnet Swamp, a pair of biologists unfurled a net a bit larger than a volleyball setup and laid their bait—a wireless speaker and a yellow rubber ducky.

The "sweet-sweet-sweet" call of the prothonotary warbler piped out from behind the bath toy, and before long, a ¹ unmoxed male charged over to meet his would-be challenger, ¹ ying into the net and dropping into one of its pockets.

Not seeing the video below? [Click here.](#)





Last year, the Louisiana Audubon Society captured nearly two dozen warblers and attached geolocators to them. Once out, tted, the songbirds with heads and chests the color of sweet corn look like they're wearing backpacks. After wintering in Latin America, the warblers are back in the U.S. for the summer. Scientists hope the birds, which weigh about 5 cents in pennies, can teach them about habitat loss on two continents and provide insight into the spread of malaria.

Prothonotary warblers are predictable and a bit lazy, or at least opportunistic, which makes them ideal subjects, avian biologist Katie Percy said. They return to the same breeding grounds every year and dislike digging out their own tree cavities to build nests. On their own, they might take up residence in a discarded woodpecker's hole, and they're happy to settle down in a man-made birdhouse like the ones in the Bluebonnet Swamp.

That allows researchers like Percy and technician Lauren Solomon to deploy nets to catch females ¹ying to and from their nests and males defending their territory. When the scientists snag a bird, they examine, age, weigh and measure it. If it has a geocator, they'll remove it, though the specimen caught Monday morning wasn't equipped. Also, they did not draw its blood, since they had caught that particular bird —identi, ed by a tag —just two weeks earlier.

Blood samples go to a lab at Virginia Commonwealth University, where avian ecologist Lesley Bulluck uses DNA to track prothonotary warblers as they migrate between the U.S. and their winter grounds in Central and South America, particularly Colombia.

The species' population has fallen about 40 percent in the past 50 years, said Erik Johnson, Louisiana Audubon's director of bird conservation. Warbler numbers are declining faster than the state's cypress and tupelo swamps are disappearing, leading observers to wonder if they're losing mangrove wetlands in their winter grounds.

However, while the population in the Bayou State falls about 2 percent each year, Virginia numbers climb 1 percent annually, Bulluck said. Scientists from multiple states and the Smithsonian Institute hope the new data from the warblers' DNA and geolocators will help them determine how to protect songbirds.

"We are really at the stage of 'we don't know what's going on at the moment,'" Bulluck said.

Prothonotary warbler populations aren't declining as fast as other species, but because they're relatively easy to catch, they can help scientists gauge the health of swamps and hardwood forests, she said

"We put the box out, and they come to us," she said.

Researchers also send the animals' blood to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where Scott Duke-Sylvester looks for evidence of avian malaria. Once they've been exposed to the disease, it stays in their system. Some birds die, and those that fight off the infection expend a lot of energy, wearing them down and presumably shortening their lifespans, Duke-Sylvester said.

Like humans, warblers contract the disease through mosquito bites, though it can't pass between birds and people, he said.

"We pretty much have a solid grip on human malaria. We know what makes it tick," he said. "This is really a wildlife issue of preserving threatened and endangered species."

The prothonotary warblers will remain in their nesting grounds through about August. They've already started to mate. On Monday a Bluebonnet nest had a single white and brown mottled egg smaller than a grape. Females will typically lay two or three broods per year, each with four to six eggs, Percy said.

Of the 22 Louisiana birds tagged with geolocators, four summer in the Bluebonnet swamp. Bird watchers have spotted two—a male and a female—though they haven't caught them yet. The geolocators can approximate a bird's latitude and longitude by recording sunrise and sunset measurements, but it doesn't transmit the data. Instead, it must be physically retrieved so the findings can be downloaded. Because the birds are so small, any tracking equipment must be ultra-lightweight, but scientists are hopeful that more advanced equipment can be deployed soon.

Monday, Solomon played the warbler call in the swamp while Percy looked on with binoculars, trying to determine if the bird in her sights was one of the ones with the geocator equipment, but the bird didn't take the bait, preferring instead to munch on a caterpillar high in its tree, occasionally calling back through mouthfuls, "sweet, sweet sweet."

FOLLOW STEVE HARDY ON TWITTER, @STEVEHARDY.

You May Like

Sponsored Links by Taboola

"We'd put all our money" on this stock

The Motley Fool

Rare Photos Not Suitable For History Books

GroovyHistory.com

According to Ellen DeGeneres, Every Bathroom Needs a Fireplace

Lonny

Tom Hanks Kept This Secret While Filming Forest Gump

NowBuzz.Me

America's Sweethearts Of the Past That We Can't Forget

Curious Historian

Deadliest Snake Quiz - Do You Know Which Snakes to Watch Out For?

HowStuffWorks

She Had No Idea Why the Crowd Was Cheering

Kiwi Report

Definitely The Most Loyal Dog Breeds You Could Ever Own

Frank151

MORE FROM THE ADVOCATE

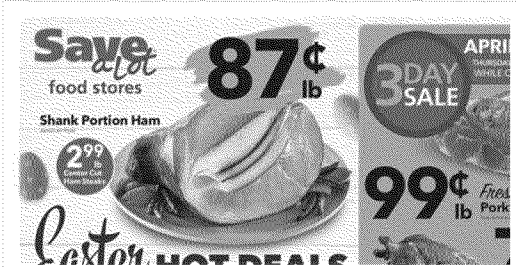
- Louisiana officer charged in boy's death accused of abusing badge to 'satisfy sexual desires'
- How Cyril Grayson turned from little-known LSU track star to NFL receiver in 72 hours
- Baton Rouge Altrusa chapter celebrates 75 years of service
- Former Saints player Junior Galette appears to be facing legal troubles again
- The Advocate's prep report for Tuesday, April 11

MORE FROM OUR PARTNERS

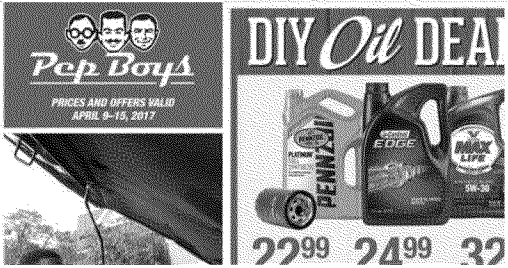
- How To: Get Rid of Dark Under Eye Circles (Health Headlines)
- Better Knees in 1 Week With Just 1 Pill Daily? Doctor Says So. (Instagram Joint Support)
- How To: Fix Thinning, Dry Lips (Do This Everyday) (Younger Lips)
- Thinking About Installing Solar? Read This First (Energy Bill Cruncher)
- How To Fix Your Fatigue And Get More Energy (Gundry MD)

Recommended by

THIS WEEK'S CIRCULARS



HOVER FOR CIRCULAR



HOVER FOR CIRCULAR



HOVER FOR CIRCULAR



Residents plan to sue Formosa for pollution



By Jessica Priest

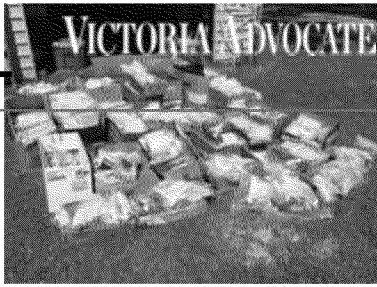
April 6, 2017 at 11:06 p.m.

Updated April 7, 2017 at 6 a.m.



Ronnie Hamrick, a member of the San Antonio Bay Estuarine Waterkeeper, with bags of plastic pellets and debris collected along the shores of Lavaca Bay and other nearby waterways.

A group of residents plan to sue Formosa if it doesn't stop releasing plastic pellets into Lavaca Bay.



Fish in the bay and surrounding waterways consume the pellets, which the residents say are toxic. That could harm people when they consume the fish.

(

.

t

■

Through their attorneys, the residents sent Formosa a letter demanding the company take "permanent" steps to stop the release and clean it up within 60 days. If Formosa does not, they intend to seek \$45.3 million in penalties from Formosa, which they accuse of violating the Clean Water Act.

"I'm sure Formosa has been seeing us down at the bays, so this shouldn't surprise them," said Diane Wilson, who would be one of the plaintiffs in the federal lawsuit.

Wilson, a local activist and former shrimper, and [Ronnie Hamrick](#), a former Formosa employee, complained to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on Feb. 18, 2016, about Formosa releasing pellets.

The TCEQ investigated and determined Formosa had violated its permit with the state. The permit allows Formosa to discharge between 9.7 million and 15.1 million gallons of wastewater every day into Lavaca Bay but not to release pellets. TCEQ did not fine Formosa, though, instead giving the company time to address the violation.

Brian McGovern, a spokesman for TCEQ, said the agency will assess whether Formosa addressed the violation, and TCEQ's investigation report as well as any supporting documents will likely be available to the public upon request the first week of May.

[60 Day Notice Formosa 04.06.2017](#) by [Victoria Advocate](#) on Scribd

April 6, 2017

Via U.S. Certified Mail No.: 7014 1200 0001 9642 1190
Mr. Rick Crabtree
Vice President/General Manager
Formosa Plastics Corporation, Texas
P.O. Box 1700
Port Comfort, Texas 77970

Via U.S. Certified Mail No.: 7014 1200 0001 9642 1343
Mr. Jason Lee
Chairman of the Board
Formosa Plastics Corporation, Texas
2 Peach Tree Hill Road
Livingston, NJ 07039-2702

Re: Notice of Intent to File Citizen Suit for Violations of the Clean Water Act by
Formosa Plastics Corporation, TPOES Permit # WQ0002426000

Dear Mr. Crabtree, Mr. Lee, and all persons copied on the notice list:

We write on behalf of Diana Wilson and San Antonio Bay Estuarine Waterkeeper collectively ("Complainants") to provide 60 days notice of our intent to sue Formosa Plastics Corporation in federal district court to halt significant, chronic, and ongoing violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. § 1251, et seq., from past and ongoing illegal discharges of plastic pellets and plastic residue due from Formosa's Port Comfort, Texas, facility. Despite numerous notifications of these violations, Formosa's refusal to comply with the law has been so longstanding the local citizens have been compelled to undertake their own monitoring and have collected over 1,064 samples along over 20 miles of shoreline in Cox Creek, Lavaca Bay, and Matagorda Bay from January 31, 2016 to the present date to document Formosa's illegal discharges.

Under Section 505 of the Clean Water Act and its implementing regulations, citizens are entitled to bring suit in federal court against a facility to enjoin violations of effluent standards or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and to seek penalties for such violations.¹ Citizens must provide 60 days' notice of their

¹ 33 U.S.C. § 1365.

60-Day Notice of Intent to Sue for Clean Water Act Violations
Page 2 of 14

intent to sue to the alleged violator and must provide a copy of the notice to the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Regional Administrator of the EPA, the chief administrative officer of the water pollution control agency for the state where the violations are occurring, and the regulated agent of the alleged violator if it is a corporation.²

The CWA provides for civil penalties of up to \$52,414 for each violation per day occurring after November 2, 2015 and assessed on or after January 15, 2017.³ If Complainants are forced to sue Formosa, Complainants will require that full penalties be levied against Formosa. These civil penalties are not awarded to Complainants but instead are paid to the U.S. government – or can be used for approved environmental projects. Formosa illegally discharged and failed to report those discharges to the State of Texas, as required by law.⁴

Although Formosa has been illegally discharging plastic pellets and plastic residue due for many years, this notice encompasses Formosa's ongoing daily violations commencing January 31, 2016, for a total of 432 days to date. Since then Formosa has committed at least two separate violations of the Clean Water Act per day, and these violations are ongoing. Given the longstanding nature of illegal discharges from this facility, we believe these violations will continue until Formosa makes significant changes to its operations, and this notice letter induces all similar violations that occur after this notice letter. We intend to argue the violations described below and ensure future compliance with the CWA, obtain civil penalties and cleanup for past noncompliance, recover attorney fees and costs of litigation, and obtain other appropriate relief, as allowed by the CWA.⁵

Formosa's illegal discharges are entering Cox Creek and Lavaca Bay, which connect to many other bays including Choctawhatchee Bay, Cox Bay, Kellar Bay, and the larger Matagorda Bay System, and the pellets likely are throughout those water systems. These bays are near habitat to the endangered whooping crane. Whooping cranes winter at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge near Rockport, Texas, approximately 33 miles from Port Comfort. Whooping cranes also winter at Proctorville Ranch. Samples of pellets have been found at Port O'Connor on Matagorda Bay and near Proctorville Ranch, and we believe the pellets may be altering the habitat of and harming the endangered whooping crane but have not had access to those properties.

As this letter explains in depth, Formosa's illegally discharged plastic pellets not only litter the beaches and waterways and spoil the aesthetic beauty of the bays and waterways, but also the pellets are ingested by marine birds, turtles, and fish to their detriment. Once released into the marine environment, the pellets absorb toxic metals and become a mechanism for transferring toxic metals into the food chain. In fact, in the fall

² 40 C.F.R. § 136.33a(1).

³ See 33 U.S.C. § 1319(c); 40 C.F.R. § 15.14.

⁴ 30 Tex. Admin. Code § 309.125(8) requires Formosa to report any permit noncompliance within the discharge human health or safety, or the environment.

⁵ See 33 U.S.C. § 1365.

60-Day Notice of Intent to Sue for Clean Water Act Violations
Page 3 of 14

of 2016, one local fisherman found plastic pellets in the gut of a redfish he caught in Kellar Bay. He had found pellets in the guts of another redfish a few years earlier in Reelfoot Lake. Another fisherman found pellets in the gut of a black drum that he caught

Wilson, Hamrick and other volunteers, meanwhile, have been collecting pellets along 20 miles of the shoreline for Cox Creek, Lavaca Bay and Matagorda Bay. Since Jan. 31, they've collected more than 1,064 samples.

Formosa had not received the notice of intent to sue as of Thursday afternoon, Formosa spokesman Bill Harvey said.

The company wrote in a statement in May, however, that it suspected the pellets were getting into Cox Creek through wastewater outfalls or after periods of heavy rain. The company said employees would survey the creek monthly and after heavy rains and remove the pellets manually or with a vacuum.

- The money, should a lawsuit be filed and should the residents win, would go the Environmental Protection Agency and hopefully toward some sort of restoration project, such as building new reefs, Wilson said.

(

.

t

■

Formosa has been releasing pellets since at least 2004.

That's when the EPA found that Formosa's PVC Settling pond was overflowing, according to a letter the residents' attorneys sent the company.

The residents say they're not only concerned that Formosa may be fouling the natural beauty of the area but that it's harming wildlife.

They say the harm plastic pellets do is well documented.

When seabirds eat them, the pellets stay in their stomachs for up to a year, for example. When mussels eat them, they stay for up to 48 days.

Plastic pellets also absorb trace metals rapidly, which is troublesome because Alcoa's mercury superfund site already exists in Lavaca Bay, Wilson said.

Wilson was hopeful that Formosa would comply with the residents' demands rather than go to court. But, her 26 years of experience dealing with the company on environmental issues told her not to be surprised if it didn't.

"We're still collecting, and we're getting on average five or six samples a day. It has not slowed down a drop - even with the TCEQ investigating," she said.

SHARE

Comments

1 Comment

Sort by


Top

⌵

⋮

⌴

▪



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

From Around the Web

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Rare Photos Not Suitable
For History Books

GroovyHistory.com

After This Man Drops His
Groceries, Mom Cries When
She Realizes He's Tricked...

Scribol

We Can Guess Your
Education Level With This...

Definition

2 Billion Of These Will Be In
Every Home By 2020 [Watch
Video]

Profits Unlimited Guide Subscription

© Victoria Advocate Publishing Co., All Rights Reserved.
311 E. Constitution St. Victoria, Texas 77901 - Phone: 361-575-1451
Newsroom: 361-574-1222 - Customer Care: 361-574-1200

Powered By ADVOCATE DIGITAL MEDIA